AUTOMOBILE NEWS FOR THE DEALER AND THE CAR OWNER

EDITED BY BURTON S. BROWN.

LONG LIFE TO BE FOUND IN MANY AUTOMOBILES

Some Advice to Owners About Getting Everything Possible Out of a Car and Keeping It Going for Long Time.

There is no doubt the production of passenger cars will be reduced considerably between now and the first of the year, especially unless manufacturers of such vehicles can obtain sufficient material and labor diverted from strictly war work. This will mean that the American public will have to use as means of transportation those vehicles already produced—the 5,000,000 cars now being driven over the roads. It has been assumed heretofore that the life of a passenger car is five years, that is when five years service has been reached the car no longer is fit for service and has value only as junk.

We have been accustomed to think in terms of a five year life, but erroneously so, because the actual life of a car is indeterminate; it depends as much upon the care and attention it receives as upon anything else. It has been said, and with a certain degree of truth, that a car can be kept running almost indefinitely if it is cared for properly and parts replaced at the proper time. And there is little reason to believe otherwise. Just because the soles of your shoes are worn through and repaired once or twice is no reason why they cannot and should not be replaced a third or a fourth time, providing the uppers are good. So with the automobile. I have seen cylinder blocks used for eight to twelve years and still being used. They have been rebored twice in that time and new pistons and rings have been fitted as many times, but the cylinders and pistons are giving as good service now as when new—perhaps a little better considering the large size.

The major parts of a car, such as the cylinders, crankcase, crankshaft, camshaft, flywheel, large clutch parts, transmission case and shafts, axle housing, propeller shaft, frame, &c., can be made to give more than ten years service. Some of them, such as the frame and propeller shaft, can be given limitless existence. Why not? Motorists must learn to make more use of the processes which up to this time have been neglected because of the ease of getting a new car and the ease of making a trade. Welding must be resorted to more to repair broken parts. Many motorists will be surprised at the kind of work a welder can perform. Broken front axles, broken crankcases, even cylinders, axle housings, &c., can be repaired and again repaired to keep them in service. Regrinding of bearings must be another step. New bearings are not so low in price as they were before the war, so the motorist should not hesitate to get acquainted with this method of prolonging the life of these vital parts. Cylinders wear oval and pistons out of round, but a regrind job on the cylinders and a set of new pistons and rings and you have practically a new engine. Crankshafts can be trued and welded if broken, and even gears may be in this way repaired to keep them in service longer.

Some engines are said to be "all in" because so many troubles are evident that only a careful going over of each and every part with perhaps a lot of repairing and replacing will again fit them for service. In these war times it is worth going to a lot of trouble to keep such an efficient transportation medium in service. End play in the crankshaft and camshaft may be due to the bearing wear and not to the shafts; noisy valves may be due to wear in a small part of the valve gear. Some of the valves may need replacement, but not all of them.

Readers are requested to write to this department for special information about keeping the engine going after it is apparently "all in" and ready for the junk pile.

Many of the old cars can be rejuvenated by the addition of modern accessories designed to do this very thing. New ignition equipment, new carbureter and fuel feed equipment are made for replacement purposes, for just such a purpose as we are discussing. No matter how old a car may be it can be made to give a fair degree of service.

Few owners ever stop to think that the car they trade in is put in shape by the service station and resold to a man who keeps it many years.

Good appearance is one of the things which an owner insists upon and which surprisingly is easy to obtain. For the standard make there are any number of special bodies to be had at small cost. A painting job helps a lot. Upholstering and top can be repaired at small cost and the few little things about the dash, the rusty instruments, scratched cowl, &c., can easily be put in first class shape.

In the present circumstances we must all remember that there is going to be a greater or less shortage of cars during the rest of the war. Yet the car is part of the efficiency of America and no inconsiderable a factor at that. Therefore it is up to every one of us to keep our old boats moving and helping to win the war by their contribution to the economic system of the country.

LOOK OVER ALL CONNECTIONS.

Best Way to Prevent Many Motor Troubles.

"No car is fool proof, but you would think they were the way some owners treat them," says Harry S. Houpt, president of the Hudson Motor Car Company of New York.

"A motorist stopped while a parade passed the other day. When he was ready to start again he stepped on the starter pedal, but the engine gave not the slightest cough in response. Instead of looking for the cause he held his foot down and waited. After five minutes had passed he looked under both sides of the hood without finding anything wrong and then resumed the cranking. A few minutes more of this and he took another perfunctory look with the same result. Little by little he discharged his battery and wore down his temper until finally both gave out.

"A little later a chauffeur drew up near by and took an interest in the proceedings, with the result that he soon located a disconnected wire. In another moment the motorist was on his way with the car running as sweetly as ever, but between his annoyance at the delay and the wear and tear on the battery he had been robbed of a large part of the day's pleasure. Rather, he had robbed himself, for the loose wire had caused preventable delay. Long before the wire dropped away from its terminal its binding nut had been loosened up a little more each day. If he had made a practice of going over the wiring occasionally he would have tightened the nut long before it could have done any harm."

A Great Ocean to Ocean Party.

The following story of a 4,000 mile trip shows how great an average mileage can be made, despite indifferent road and weather conditions, by the average motor car:

"We left Seattle on June 16 on a transcontinental tour," says the driver. "Our party consisted of Mrs. W. J. Halberstadt, her daughter Elizabeth, Nellie Rusor, Gus Anderson and Jerry, our 'mascot.'

"Instead of staying at hotels, at night we pitched tent and slept in the open. We cooked our own meals, which consisted of two a day, buying the dairy products of the farm houses along the road and other needed articles at the villages.

"Crossing the beautiful Cascade Mountains by way of the Snowqualamie Pass in Washington, the roads were like boulevards. On leaving the mountains we entered the Yakima Valley, where the world famed Wenatach apples are grown.

"Following the Yellow Stone trail in Oregon, we encountered very bad roads, especially in the Blue Mountains. In some places they were very narrow, steep and winding, almost impassable, and with numerous chuck holes. After driving down one hill with an unusually difficult road to get through, we saw a sign reading 'Avoid This Road—It Is Dead Man's Hill.'

"After leaving Oregon we travelled for days and days in sage brush, lava rock and sand, each one of us carrying a water bag. The houses were few and far between. Two of us were very ill from the alkali dust, which made our throats very sore.

"Many places we had to detour for a hundred miles, owing to cloudbursts which caused rivers to swell and washed away bridges.

"After ten days of strenuous driving we arrived at Salt Lake City, staying there four days. During that time we viewed all the points of interest, not forgetting to go bathing in Salt Lake.

"Meeting the Lincoln Highway, we crossed the Wasatch Mountains. All the way through Utah and Wyoming the days were intensely hot. Sometimes it was 118 in the shade, but at night it was so cold that icicles formed on our water bags. The roads in Wyoming were full of chuck holes and very rocky for hundreds of miles at a time. While driving through the Red Desert we saw numerous skeletons—two of which were human beings.

"The ascent to the Rocky Mountains was a very easy grade. On the top of the mountains it was like a huge plain. We saw the 'Arms Monument' at the highest point of the great Continental Divide.

"All through Nebraska the roads were especially good and, moreover, very beautiful.

"In Iowa we encountered very bad roads, due to the rain. One day we could travel but thirty-five miles. All through the State we pulled many large cars out of the mud, but some were stuck so badly that we had to pass them by.

"All through Illinois and Indiana the roads were fair.

"While driving over the Alleghany Mountains in Pennsylvania we met a caravan of about 150 army trucks. We stopped over at Middletown for two days and then drove to Gettysburg. Travelling through Pennsylvania was quite difficult, due to the fact that the roads were all cut up.

"From Gettysburg we motored to Baltimore, Md., and then to Washington, D. C., and then came to New York, at which point our speedometer registered close to 4,000 miles.

"In contemplating this trip, it was our conviction that much of the comfort and pleasure of the riding would be dependent on the tires with which we were equipped and we found this to be literally true.

"Fortunately, having had thousands of miles of driving experience at home with Brunswick tires, we decided in their favor, and though no harder test could possibly be given them than the varied conditions of roads and weather we experienced, our Brunswicks came through splendidly and will remain with us on our return trip.

"All told, our actual driving time was thirty days, averaging 130 miles a day.

"We intend to drive back by the northern route, stopping off at Buffalo, Niagara Falls, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Clear Lake, Wis.; Yellowstone National Park and other places of interest, arriving home about the first of October."

New Fordson Tractor in Action.

The new Fordson farm tractor is in town and being exhibited at the headquarters of Albert Hirst, Inc., 2008 Broadway.

Mr. Hirst, who is the sole agent for this famous tractor made by Henry Ford and his son, expects big sales in this territory.

This tractor sells for $885 f. o. b. Dearborn. Plough and disc harrow attachments are furnished at low figures. Being small, light—2,700 pounds—and economical, it is adapted for use on farms of all sizes.

Mr. Hirst says that deliveries of the tractor will be continuous from this date and can be obtained in about two weeks from date of ordering.

Owners' Service Department

Do you think it pays to take a Cadillac, four years old, and make a formatruck out of it? The car is in fairly good shape, but I am afraid the heavy load will put it out of business in a month, and that certainly won't pay for the attachment.—JAMES GILLEN.

I cannot tell the condition of the chassis, but after a fairly good repair job the chassis should be good for many years of service. You know better than I the condition of the chassis. It certainly pays to use an old chassis for one of the attachments.

* * *

Is it possible for a rear axle shaft to break when running ahead at a steady speed? What might cause the breakage outside of defective material?—S. R. ALDEN.

The shaft might break at any time. It may be caused by defective material, a weak spot in the shaft caused by a cut, out of alignment of the shaft.

* * *

With this new law going into effect adding 2 cents a gallon to the cost of gas what would you suggest to make up for the loss? In my case it means a great deal, as I am operating a number of trucks and two passenger cars, and the total amount of gas used in a week comes to a tidy sum.—ABSUTHNOT.

On the trucks I would suggest trying a kerosene outfit. There is no reason why kerosene cannot be handled to a satisfactory degree. Of course there will not be the same flexibility as with gasoline, and a small tank of gas will be needed for starting, but on the whole the results should prove satisfactory and the saving appreciable. The passenger cars can be fitted with a water injecting device and the instructions in my economy article followed out.

* * *

I have a 1914 Ford touring car which is giving me considerable trouble. When I run about twenty-five miles an hour the car works well and also when it has to pull, but when it is running ten or fifteen miles an hour it operates as if the timer were missing one point of contact; in other words in a jerky manner. I have batteries on the car and I have tested the plugs and they all work fine. Also when I turn the engine I get a fine buzz on all points of contact with the timer. The coils buzz in good shape also. I have taken all the wires off and I cannot find any broken nor any short circuit anywhere. The valves have not been ground for about a year and when the engine runs as above there is a sort of spit from the exhaust. Could the valves be causing this jerky action? It does not spit when it runs fast or pulls hard.—C. W. MUSTOE.

The jerking is caused by misfiring, due either to poor valve action or improper carburetion. First check up the carbureter adjustment and then attend to the valves. Possibly wear in the tappet is such that there is too great a clearance for slow speed work.

MAGNETO REQUIRES LITTLE ATTENTION

Here Are Some Suggestions That Wil Prevent Magneto Ignition Trouble.

By WILLIAM H. STEWART, JR., President Stewart Auto School.

Ordinarily the magneto requires very little attention. About seven parts neglect and one part intelligent cleaning and oiling is all that is necessary. The following points should be helpful: Keep the magneto perfectly dry at all times, using one drop of oil in each bearing once a week and cleaning distributer, circuit breaker and collector ring once a month. By one drop of oil is meant just one drop of oil—no more—not a full squirt of oil from an oil can.

Magneto must be kept dry, as moisture causes it to miss explosions by short circuiting the distributer. The dust which accumulates on outside and inside the distributer is a prolific source of trouble, as it may easily become a bridge for the current and so produce an annoying short circuit. Of course any brushes that are worn out or broken should be replaced immediately. At the same time do not neglect the circuit breaker, as the platinum points become corroded by the incessant sparking and finally the primary current passes with difficulty or not at all. This is easily remedied by passing a piece of very fine sandpaper between the points, allowing them to spring together to give the pressure necessary. It is not advisable for the novice to use a file as there is danger of filing the points unevenly.

It might be well at the same time to try the gap between points to make sure it has not shifted. The gauge provided by the manufacturer on the side of the magneto wrench should pass freely through the gap, just touching the sides gently. Then remove the collector brush and get a good look at the collector ring. If it has become covered with dirt, oil and carbon dust these should be removed with a cloth dipped in gasolene or alcohol.

If magneto fails to deliver current at any time the above points should be gone over, as the most frequent causes of failure may be found among them. If the spark is not now restored in its original strength it will be necessary to remove the magneto or at least loosen it from the driving shaft. This should never be attempted unless you are perfectly sure of your ability to restore it properly—but this is not as difficult as it may seem. Set No. 1 cylinder on firing dead centre, which means that the piston must be at the top of its movement and both valves closed. This is best obtained by watching the exhaust valve of the last cylinder, No. 4 on a four cylinder engine and No. 6 on a six cylinder engine. Crank slowly by hand, watching exhaust valve of last cylinder open and close. Before it has entirely closed look for dead centre mark on flywheel and put it under pointer or in line with centre of cylinder. Now mark coupling with a file or prick punch so that it may be replaced exactly as it was. Also observe position of distributing arm in distributer, as it must always be in this position when No. 1 cylinder is on firing dead centre. This is extremely important, as the coupling on driving shaft may be put back correctly and still have the distributer wrongly set. If high tension wires to spark plugs have to be removed each one should be marked or tagged so that they may be replaced exactly in their former arrangement.

The object of disconnecting the drive shaft of the magneto is to enable you to spin the armature by hand and to look for a spark. Turn slowly and note if there is any drag on the armature just about the time the breaker points separate. If there is a drag the magnets are weak. Now see if a spark comes from the collecton ring by resting a screwdriver on it and turning the armature rapidly. If no spark jumps from screwdriver the magneto should be returned to the service station.

Practical Paragraphs.

On Washing.

The car should never be washed in direct sunlight. If the operation is not carried out in the garage the vehicle should be in the shade while being washed. The direct rays of the sun striking on water cause heating which tends to dull the finish. In the same way the hood should never be washed when it is hot, as directly after a run.

Vise Usefulness.

Not only is the heavy vise a valuable part of the garage equipment for its obvious service, but it may often be advantageously used for straightening bent parts. In doing this care should be taken to place the part to be operated on in such a way that the pressure comes against the support of the vise, as this obviates severe strain on the outer jaw and screw thread.

Kerosene and Carbon.

Kerosene will not dissolve carbon, tradition to the contrary; but a little kerosene put into the cylinders may loosen the carbon. It breaks up the caked deposits, which may then partially be blown out of the exhaust. The method of using the kerosene is as follows: About a tablespoonful of the kerosene is poured into the combustion chamber while the engine is hot. The engine is then allowed to stand for about twelve hours, when an eighth glass of kerosene is fed into the air valve of the carbureter with the engine running and throttle well open. Feed the kerosene slowly and the engine sucks it in.

Motor Adjustments.

Adjustments made on the engine while it is cold seldom are satisfactory in actual operation. The engine heats up when running and the metal expands with the warmth, which nullifies the value of adjustments made when the metal was cold.

Cause of Missing.

A not infrequent cause of spasmodic engine missing is either moisture or grease on the ignition distributer face. The current passes across the surface of the water or oil instead of pursuing its proper course. It is a good plan to give the distributer a cleaning at frequent intervals.

Frosted Glass.

There are a number of ways of producing frosted glass, some of them available to the ordinary motor car owner without any special shop equipment. By dissolving two teaspoonfuls of Epsom salts in a pint of beer, there will be procured a solution that applied to the glass with a stiff brush gives a very effective frosting, though naturally it is not permanent. A more thorough way is to rub the glass with a small bag of muslin filled with powdered glass, fine sand, emery or grindstone grit and water. This gives a permanent effect of frosting.

Cleaning Corroded Terminals.

Corroded terminals are one of the most frequent causes of ignition trouble, and it is not generally known that the best agent for cleaning them is a strong solution of washing soda. After the corrosion has been removed and the terminals dried grease the parts well with cup grease or vaseline.

Water and Tire Wear.

Wet rubber cuts much more easily than the same substance dry. For this reason the wise car owner does not try to speed over wet roads where any chance thrown sharp stone gets an opportunity to do maximum damage.

Leather Washers.

A leather washer placed underneath the metal washer not only helps to eliminate unnecessary noise, but give a sort of elastic compression that prevents stripped threads when the bolt is a little small for its job.

Getting the Job Done Quickly.

Herewith is shown a Cleveland tractor operating with a Walter A. Wood hay loader.

MEETING WARTIME NEEDS.

N. Y. Tire Service Company Shows Its Loyalty.

Faced with war time conditions, the motor trade throughout the country has responded splendidly to the wishes of the War Economy Board of the Council of National Defence in the matter of closing their establishments evenings, Sundays and holidays.

The New York Tire Service, Inc., Broadway at Sixty-sixth street, dealers in United States tires, are among the most enthusiastic supporters of any movement to help the Government win the war. They were quick to respond to the request issued by the War Economy Board, despite the fact that long ago this company had adopted as one of its slogans, "Open Every Hour in the Year."

Realizing that this new request is patriotic, the patrons of the New York Tire Service, Inc., are looking upon it in the proper light and are keen in their appreciation of the spirit of the company. They realize that the closing request will work no hardship on them and are gradually adjusting themselves to the new order of things.

The New York Tire Service, Inc., believes in the conservation of light, fuel, rubber, man power, dollars, and in fact the conservation of every war time necessity to help the Government bring about the unconditional surrender of the Boche.

WATCH TIRE TREADS.

Keep Them Intact to Prevent Injury to Fabric.

It is surprising how many motorists never bother about the condition of the tread of their tires, says an expert of the B. F. Goodrich Rubber Company. The tread of rubber covering protects the cotton carcass of the tire from injury. Obviously then it is important that the tread be kept intact. Otherwise dirt, grease, water and other injurious substances gain access to the fabric and rapid deterioration results.

Small slashes and holes should be immediately plugged with plastic. If minor cuts that are caused by running over glass, sharp pebbles, etc., are not taken care of the tire will surely go out of service prematurely. As the tire rolls along the cut sucks in water and gravel, which are absorbed by the fabric, just as a wick absorbs oil. The moisture causes a separation of the tread from the fabric and the dirt works in at the point of separation. Soon the accumulation of dirt causes a "sand blister" or "mud boil." The tread continues to loosen further around the tire and the fabric slowly rots away.

A War Saving Order.

Mark L. Requa, director of oil division, United States Fuel Administration, has unmistakably recognized the war time gasolene economy of the Franklin automobile to the extent that he has purchased a Franklin touring car and a Franklin four passenger roadster.